



Preschool Hotline Newsletter

Winter 2018 Edition

In this issue

- Using Specific Action Words and Describing Words in Everyday Life
- Ways to fit Language learning into our daily life
- Action Books

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• **Ready, setgo!!** And off we zoom into another Fall, followed closely by another Northern winter. This time of year seems to be very busy for folks as we settle into more indoor activities and the busy lives we lead.

• But even in our busy lives, language stimulation for your little ones doesn't need to take a break. Find out how language learning can fit into your daily routines and not be extra work during your busy day!

• Also learn about the importance of using action words and describing words. We are often great at pointing and naming objects to our little people (cat, dog, cup, milk) but we sometimes forget to add in those actions or description words (furry cat, cold milk, the dog is barking). Using more specific language will help develop your child's vocabulary. And so much

happens in your daily life with kids, that there are lots of opportunity to develop language without adding an extra "to do" to your list.

As always, please connect with your local Speech-Language Pathologist if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's speech or language development. Or look for us in Programs under Services at northernhealth.ca

Enjoy boosting your child's language!!

**From your Northern Health
Community Speech &
Language Team**

Using Specific Action Words and Describing Words in Everyday Life

Adults often use non-specific words when talking to children. We say things like “this one,” “on there,” and “over here.” While children can figure out what we want when we use non-specific words, they don’t learn what the real words are that describe what we’re talking about. For example, if we’re at home and say “this one” when what we mean is “get the small teddy bear,” our children don’t hear and learn the words “get,” “small,” or “teddy bear.” They also don’t learn how to use them when speaking.

Everyday Actions Words:

- Go
- Look
- Be
- Come
- Get
- Eat
- See
- Want
- Do

The words adults often leave out or replace with non-specific words are action words and describing words. Action words describe an action or a state of being (e.g., “be,” “walk,” “eat,” “jump,” etc.); they are very important, because sentences don’t exist without action words. For example, if a child says “mommy car,” they could mean “mommy crashed the car,” “mommy go in the car,” “mommy there is a car,” or “mommy look at the car.” Without the action word, it’s a guessing game.

Describing words tell about a person, place, thing, or action. Describing words give other words more meaning and make our statements more precise. Describing words include words like “in,” “on,” “slow,” “fast,” “big,” “little,” numbers, and colours. Without describing words, we and our children can only talk about things the same way all the time, even when they are different.

Luckily, everyday activities are full of action words and describing words! Bath time? You can say words like splash, swim, wash, pour, wet, and on. At the grocery store? You can use words like push, look, pick up/out, in, and a variety of numbers and colours. Going for a drive? Tell your child about what people are doing outside of the window as you drive by.

Be sure to use lots of action words and describing words to help children learn more about the world around them!

Everyday Describing Words:

- In, on, out, under, beside
- Hot
- Cold
- Big
- Small
- Fast
- Slow
- Full
- Empty



Ways to fit Language learning into our daily life

One of the best things we can do with our children is help them learn to communicate. All you have to do is use the communication opportunities that are part of your everyday life and make sure you are talking with your kids.

- **The table** - Mealtimes are natural opportunities for conversation. You are sitting face to face and looking at each other, which is ideal for communication. You can name the food items (e.g., apples), describe the food (e.g., hot, crunchy), and talk about actions that happen (e.g., pouring the milk). You can chat about things that will happen or that have happened. Talking about all of these things will help increase the words that your child knows (e.g., their vocabulary).
- **The car** - When you are driving you have to sit and slow down. This gives us the time to talk with our children and wait for a response. Slowing down and waiting are strategies that can help with language learning. Driving also provides opportunities to learn new words: you can talk about the objects you see (e.g., garbage truck, hospital, school, dog, snow), the places you are going (e.g., preschool), and the people you are going to see (e.g., Grandma).
- **Waiting rooms** - You are waiting anyway, so why not talk? Talk about what is happening in the waiting room (e.g., “we are waiting for our turn”, “that boy is sitting and waiting, too”). Talk about what is going to happen in the appointment (e.g., “the dentist is going to look in your mouth”).
- **The bath** - Baths need to happen and create face to face interaction. At bath time, you can talk about body parts (e.g., feet, toes) and use action words (e.g., wash, rinse, splash, pour).
- **Change Time/Getting Dressed** - Talking is a great way to keep your little one still when you are changing them. It is a time to use clothing words (e.g., shirt on, pants on). You can also use sequencing terms to help your child learn words about the order of events; for example, “first we put your diaper on, then your shirt, your pants go on last”. It is a time to offer choices (e.g., “red shirt or blue shirt”). Offering choices helps with language growth as you are providing an example of the words you would like your child to copy, making it easier for them to copy.
- **The Grocery Store** - The store provides many chances to increase your child’s words. You can talk about the different food items or describe their features (e.g., red apple or green apple), you can talk about number concepts (e.g., one cabbage, a few pears). You can also work on social skills, like greeting the cashier (e.g., “hi, bye”).
- **Bed Time** - The end of the day is a wonderful time to sit and talk with your child. It is also a good time to read to your child. Books expose children to new words and provide repetition which is key for learning language.

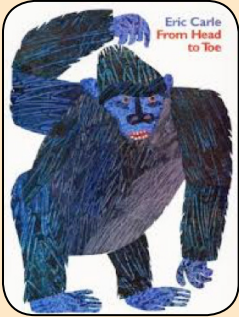
Things to do:

- Teach my child to communicate!



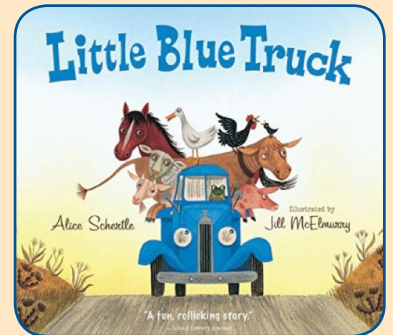
The main thing to remember is taking the time to talk to your children during your daily activities, because to learn to use language children need to have someone to talk too and talk with them.

Actions Books

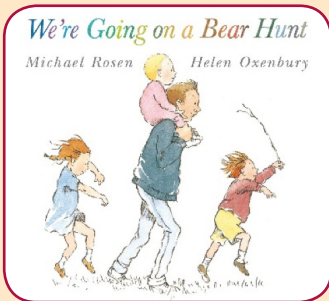


There are many books that we can actually get active with our children. Eric Carle's "from Head to Toe" is a great book for doing the actions that the animals are doing – so thump your chest like a gorilla or wriggle your hips like a crocodile.

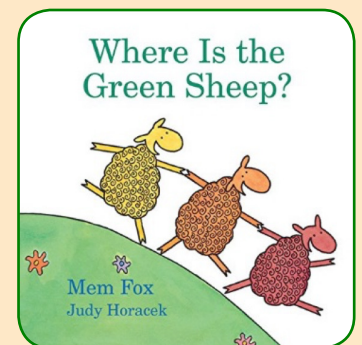
This book is about a happy little blue truck driving along a country road, greeting all his friends. There's a lot of beeping and honking and pushing and skidding. Some great actions with the little blue truck.



Imagine going on a bear hunt with your family and sliding down a grassy slope or stumbling through a deep dark forest. Great repetition and some fun action words as you go on bear hunt.



Although the words in the book are all about the different type of sheep, all the sheep are doing some action – from flying a kite to surfing in the waves to standing on the moon. Packed full of action words as long as you describe the picture and what's happening.



Sleeping bunnies song

See the little bunnies sleeping til it's nearly noon

Shall we wake them with a merry tune?

They're so still, are they ill?

No! Wake up bunnies!

Hop little bunnies, hop, hop, hop

Hop little bunnies, hop, hop, hop

Hop little bunnies, hop, hop, hop

Hop little bunnies, hop and stop

It's easy to adapt this song. Pick an animal and then do an action for that animal (e.g., run little horse, run, run, run, purr little kitten, fly little butterfly).